

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A hierarchical programmable-priority content addressable memory (CAM) system including first, second and third CAM devices. The first CAM device has a first priority number output and a first enable input. The second CAM device has a priority number input and an enable output coupled to the priority number output and the first enable input, respectively, of the first CAM device. The second CAM device also has a priority number output and an enable input. The third CAM device has a priority number input and an enable output coupled to the priority number output and the enable input, respectively, of the second CAM device.